

## WIPP Quick Facts

(As of 02-01-06)

**4,295**

Shipments received since opening

**35,108**

Cubic meters of waste disposed

**74,480**

Containers disposed in the underground

## New location!

The WIPP Santa Fe Office has moved. Come see us at:

2905 Rodeo Park Drive, East  
Building 4  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

## Anderson appointed manager, Assurance Programs

Beck Anderson has been appointed Manager, Assurance Programs. In this position he is responsible for the independent assessment program, corrective action program, and maintenance and implementation of the quality assurance program.

Anderson is a 39-year veteran of the quality assurance nuclear industry.

## Legislative update draws crowd

Governor, Lieutenant Governor in attendance

Alarm clocks in Santa Fe, NM were ringing early last Thursday. Despite the 6:30 a.m. start time and cool morning temperatures, about 65 state legislators, officials and other special guests attended the 2006 WIPP Legislative Update.

"The most important thing is to keep [WIPP] running safely and efficiently."

Governor Bill Richardson



CBFO Manager Dave Moody briefed guests on WIPP's status and on the priorities for the coming year. "Together," said Moody speaking about the many organizations involved, "we have made WIPP the crown jewel of the DOE's cleanup effort."

On hand to hear Moody's presentation were New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and Lt. Governor Diane Denish. "Next year, can you do this any earlier?" joked the governor. More seriously, he commented on the interactions between WIPP and the state: "You guys at WIPP are complying and working well with us," he said. "Every year, WIPP becomes more technically efficient."

Richardson also addressed the potential public hearing on the draft WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit for Section 311, remote-handled waste and container management. "[New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Secretary] Ron Curry and I are thinking about having it in Carlsbad. What do you think about that?" The hearing is tentatively planned for late March, but an exact date or location for it, if necessary, has not been set.

WTS General Manager Dick Raaz's comments emphasized safety. "We show people how work at a nuclear waste facility can be done ... and done safely." Raaz

---

## WIPP employees volunteer to learn automatic external defibrillator

At the WIPP site and at the Skeen-Whitlock Building (SWB), there are automatic external defibrillators (AED), but recently at the SWB no one was qualified to use it. Since a nurse is not regularly stationed at the building, a number of employees took the time to learn how to properly use the life-saving device.

Congratulations to Kim Greer (WTS), John Angelis (WTS), John Lucero (NCI), Bill Weston (WRES), Ron Reeves (WRES), Joann Marshall (WTS), Ashley Urquidez (TRU Staffing), Judy Seal (WTS), Art Chavez (WRES), Sharleen Strong (WTS), Yolanda Navarrete (WTS) and Mak Walker (WTS) for taking on this challenge.

Instruction was provided by Cheri Williams and Bob Paslay.

Submitted by:  
Anita J. Self, RN COHNS  
WIPP Health Services Administrator

---

also announced the new location of WTS' WIPP Information Office in Santa Fe . The new location will improve accessibility for the public and staff and is closer to the NMED offices.

The annual event is hosted by southeast New Mexico legislators and was emceed by the delegation's senior senator, Carroll Leavell. Representative John Heaton shared his pride in WIPP with fellow legislators by citing the cleanup of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS). "I would have never expected that that facility could have been cleaned up!"

In addition to the cleanup of RFETS, TRU waste cleanup was completed at five small-quantity sites around the country since last year's legislative update.

---

## House Bill 687 calls for changes in mine safety

Following the tragic deaths of 12 miners trapped by an underground explosion in West Virginia's Sago mine last month, West Virginia lawmakers passed a mine safety bill to improve miners' chances of surviving an underground disaster.

Two days after the Sago accident, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson ordered safety inspections of New Mexico's five underground mines, saying, "This tragedy again underlies what a hazardous occupation underground mining can be, especially coal mining." Coal mines, such as Sago, are so-called "gassy" mines due to methane emissions from coal beds.

New Mexico's only coal mine, the San Juan mine near Farmington, was the first mine to be inspected in early January. Last week, New Mexico Mine Inspector Rebecca Boam visited area potash mines and WIPP.

Earlier this week, Senator John Heaton introduced House Bill 687, which mirrors safety features of the West Virginia bill, but includes language relevant to New Mexico's underground mines. The bill is now in committee with passage possible later this week. House Bill 687 calls for:

- | Each mine operator to prepare and post an emergency notification plan with the state mine inspector
- | The state mine inspector to establish a mine accident emergency operations center that is accessible 24-hours a day, seven days a week. The mine accident EOC will be the primary state government communications center for dealing with mine accidents
- | Mine operators to notify the mine accident EOC of serious accidents/fatalities within 30 minutes of a mine accident or face potential fines of up to \$100,000
- | Underground miners to wear self-contained, self-rescue devices that adequately protect them for one hour or longer, or are sufficient to allow the

miners time to reach additional self-contained self-rescuers

- | Mine operators to provide additional caches of self-contained, self-rescue devices throughout the mine with locating strobe lights affixed to each cache
- | Mine operators to provide miners in each working area with wireless emergency communication devices or two-way radio system that allows emergency communications from the working area to the surface

Added to the bill is an “Employees Rights” section stating that mine operators can not discharge or discriminate against employees for complaining about danger, safety or health violations.

House Bill 687 would require some changes at WIPP– most notably, the type of self-rescue device worn by miners, added caches of self-rescue devices and the wireless communication system for miners.

Already one of the safest mines in the state, WIPP’s recordable injury case rate in 2005 was 0.7, compared to the mining industry’s national average of 4.1. Based on its record of safety, mine operator, Washington TRU Solutions, has been designated “Operator of the Year” for 19 consecutive years by the New Mexico mine inspector.

The facility has three shafts for emergency egress – accessible from the deepest part of the mine within 30 minutes (under normal conditions). WIPP’s underground ventilation system, which is capable of pumping as much as 460,000 cubic feet of air per minute into the mine, is designed with four separate air circuits. Each air circuit has primary and secondary escape ways.

Should the bill pass, New Mexico’s underground mines will have 90 days to develop an implementation plan and have it approved by the state mine inspector.

---

## **Biodiesel: Out of the frying pan and into the gas tank**

President Bush’s State of the Union address has put the spotlight on alternative fuels and there is some promising work being done on biodiesel in Carlsbad, New Mexico . The Center of Excellence for Hazardous Material Management (CEHMM) is collecting used cooking oil from local restaurants and converting it to biodiesel. CEHMM is a non-profit organization, funded through a DOE grant, dealing with technical projects, information, education, U.S.-Mexico border environmental issues and research related to hazardous materials management.



**Left:** The biodiesel processor, where separation and conversion take place.

**Above:** This unit is used to blend, store and distribute the final biodiesel product.

Cynthia Zvonar, CBFO's environmental compliance policy specialist, recently toured the biodiesel production facility. "I'm very interested in resource management, and biodiesel is a great example of obtaining energy from waste. The federal government has been mandated to reduce its energy consumption and biodiesel could help meet that requirement."

Here are some frequently asked questions:

#### **What is biodiesel?**

Biodiesel is a clean-burning alternative fuel produced from domestic, renewable resources. Biodiesel contains no petroleum, and it can be used as pure fuel or blended at any level with petroleum diesel to create a biodiesel blend. It can be used in compression ignition (diesel) engines with no major modifications. Biodiesel is simple to use, biodegradable, nontoxic, and essentially free of sulfur and aromatics.

#### **Can I use biodiesel in my existing diesel engine?**

Biodiesel works in any diesel engine with few or no modifications to the engine or the fuel system. Biodiesel has a solvent effect that may release deposits accumulated on tank walls and pipes from previous diesel fuel usage. The release of deposits may end up in fuel filters initially, so fuel filters should be checked more frequently at first. Ensure that only fuel meeting the biodiesel specification (D 6751) is used.

#### **Can biodiesel help reduce carbon dioxide emissions?**

A 1998 biodiesel lifecycle study, jointly sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), concluded biodiesel reduces net carbon dioxide emissions by 78 percent compared to petroleum diesel.

#### **Does biodiesel take more energy to make than it gives back?**

No. Biodiesel actually has the highest "energy balance" of any transportation fuel. The DOE/USDA lifecycle analysis shows for every unit of fossil energy it takes to make biodiesel, 3.2 units of energy are gained. This takes into account the planting, harvesting, fuel production and fuel transportation to the end user.

## Happy Birthday Wishes!

Jim Hollen (WTS)  
January 25

Jeff Winkel (WTS)  
February 2

Joe Willis (WTS)  
February 3

Shane Thompson (WTS)  
February 4

Deanne Rodriguez (WTS)  
February 4

Steve Sauer (NCI)  
February 7

Bob Nieman (WTS)  
February 7

Gayla White (L&M)  
February 8

Ashok Kadakia (WTS)  
February 8

Monica Martinez (CTAC)  
February 10

Mak Walker (WTS)  
February 11

Sean White (WRES)  
February 11

Preston Harvey (WTS)  
February 15

Is your birthday on our list?  
Employee birthdays are submitted once and must be re-approved for publication by you every year. Please submit birth dates to the TRU TeamWorks staff at: [TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws](mailto:TRUTeamWorks@wipp.ws).

### Does biodiesel cost more than other alternative fuels?

A federal tax incentive is expected to help lower the cost of biodiesel blends in both taxable and tax exempt markets. Additionally, when reviewing the high costs associated with other alternative fuel systems, many fleet managers determine biodiesel is their least-cost-strategy to comply with state and federal regulations. Use of biodiesel does not require major engine modifications. That means operators keep their same fleets, spare parts inventories, refueling stations and skilled mechanics.

### Where can I purchase biodiesel?

The National Biodiesel Board (NBB) maintains a list of registered fuel suppliers, as well as petroleum distributors and retail fueling sites. A current list is available on the biodiesel web site at [www.biodiesel.org](http://www.biodiesel.org).

These questions and answers were reprinted with permission from biodiesel.org.

## Innovative approach combines safety and creativity

The safety culture at WIPP has taken an artistic twist. Stan Patchet, manager of the WTS Mine Engineering group, is known for his innovative safety meetings, but this time he not only encouraged employee involvement in safety, but creativity, as well.

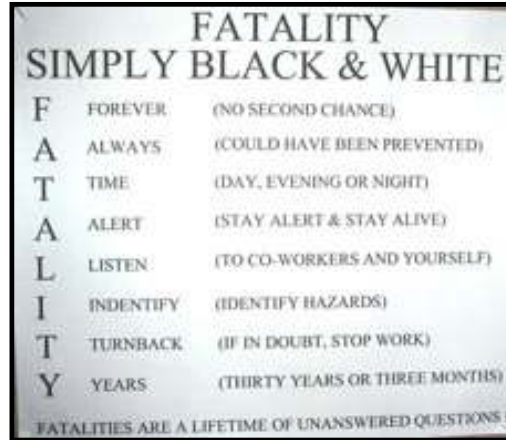


Don Galbraith (CBFO) and Shari Cullum (WTS) admiring the creativity of the WTS Mine Engineering group.

Photos courtesy of Curtis Potter, WTS Industrial Safety and Hygiene



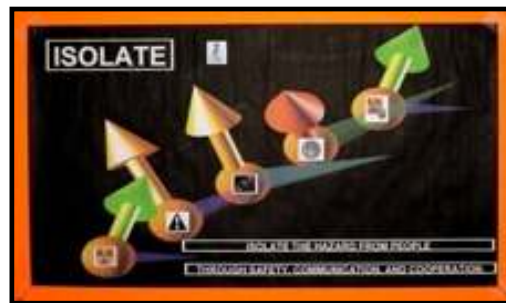
At a recent weekly safety meeting, each person randomly picked a word from a list of safety-related terms. Their challenge was to create a poster that represented what that word meant to them. At the following safety meeting, each person displayed his/her poster, and the group discussed the words and any actions that they might take to further enhance safety at WIPP.



**Fatality** - Created by Jerry Graham

And what did the participants think of it? "Pretty neat," says Norm Siepel (WTS). "We use a lot of these words on a daily basis, but don't always stop and think about what they mean." One of the posters that generated a lot of discussion was Jerry Graham's (WTS) depiction of the word fatality. Used as an acronym, the letter 'f' stood for 'Forever.'

"The activity reinforced a lot of things," adds Siepel. "Everybody left with a sense of heightened awareness. And sometimes, that's what it takes to prevent an injury or even a death."



**Isolate** - Created by Linda Santo

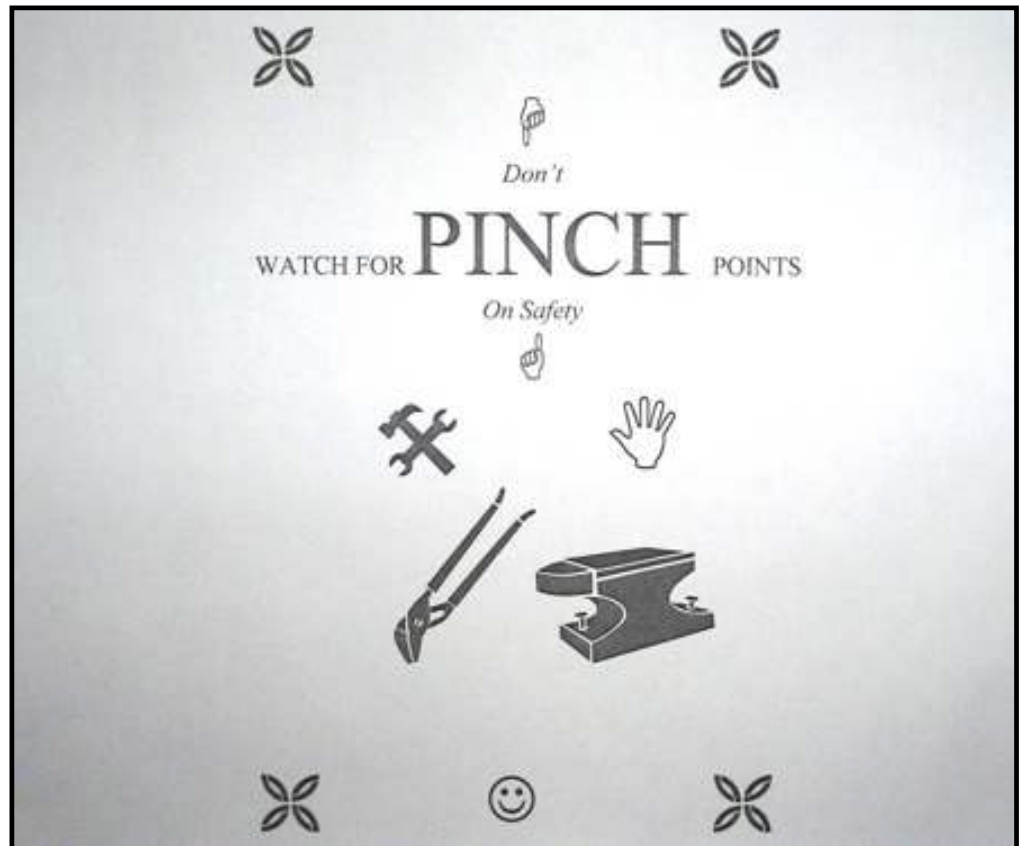
The final products are on display in the Engineering Building at the WIPP site. Click [here](#) to see pictures of all the posters.

The U.S. Department of Energy  
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

Please send comments and/or  
suggestions to: [TRU TeamWorks](#)



**Injury** - Created by Dan Middleton



**Pinch** - Created by Chuck D'Antonio



**Hazard** - Created by Tom Phillips

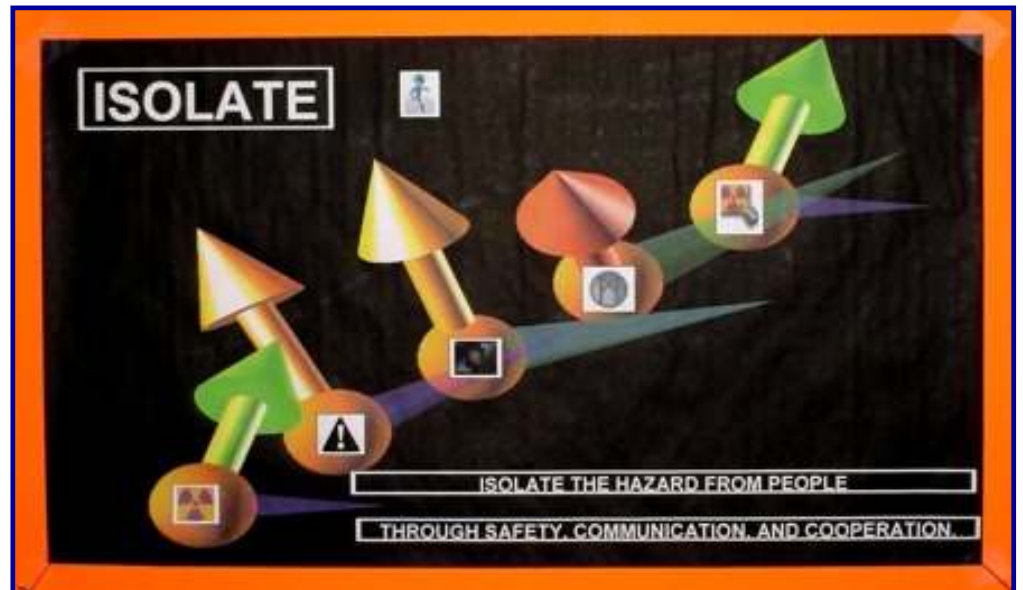


# FATALITY SIMPLY BLACK & WHITE

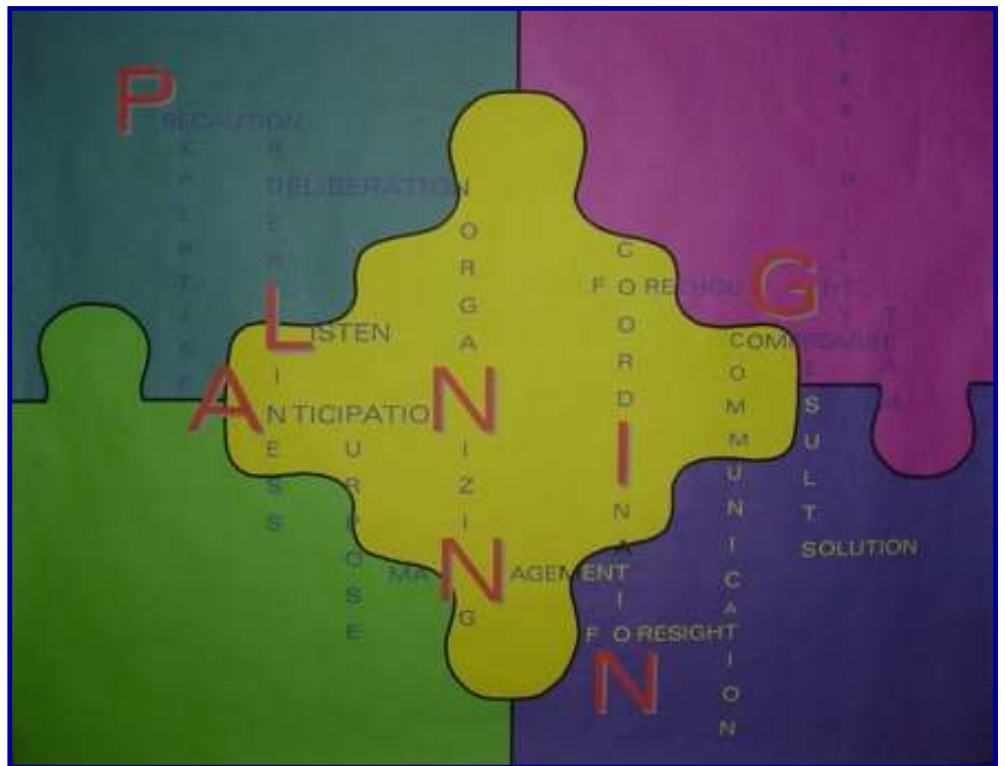
F	FOREVER	(NO SECOND CHANCE)
A	ALWAYS	(COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED)
T	TIME	(DAY, EVENING OR NIGHT)
A	ALERT	(STAY ALERT & STAY ALIVE)
L	LISTEN	(TO CO-WORKERS AND YOURSELF)
I	IDENTIFY	(IDENTIFY HAZARDS)
T	TURNBACK	(IF IN DOUBT, STOP WORK)
Y	YEARS	(THIRTY YEARS OR THREE MONTHS)

FATALITIES ARE A LIFETIME OF UNANSWERED QUESTIONS !

**Fatality** - Created by Jerry Graham



**Isolate** - Created by Linda Santo



**Planning** - Created by Jill Farnsworth



**Careful** - Created by Shari Cullum

**Visible** - Created by Ty Zimmerly



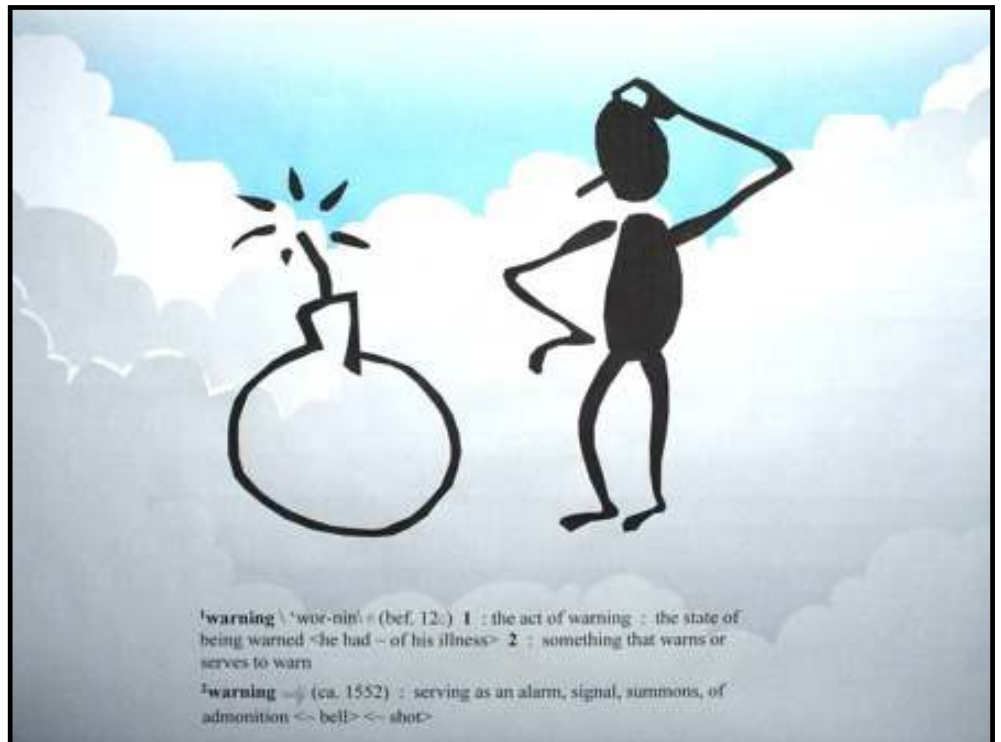
**Risky** - Created by Norm Siepel



SAFETY IS THE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS

<b>A</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>M</b>
W	I	C	E	E
A	S	T	S	D
R	T	I	P	I
E	E	O	O	A
N	N	N	N	T
E			S	E
S			E	
S				

Alarm - Created by Bob Pressett



Warning - Created by Dave Sjomeling